

Whritenour House
1293 Greenwood Lake Turnpike
West Milford
Passaic County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-922

HABS
NJ,
16-MILEFW,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HABS
NJ,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WHRITENOUR HOUSE

HABS No. NJ-922

Location:

1293 Greenwood Lake Turnpike, West Milford, Passaic
County, New Jersey

Long Pond Ironworks Historic District

USGS: Greenwood Lake Quadrangle; Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 17.558140.4554200

Present Owner:

State of New Jersey

Present Occupant:

Vacant March 1986

Significance:

The Whritenour House is an integral component of the Long Pond Ironworks National Register Historic District. The core of this house may date to as early as c. 1815. The main plan/form of the house, dating to c. 1835, represents the occupancy of Matthias Whritenour (1802-90), a local farmer and minister at the Methodist-Episcopal Church at nearby Stonetown. Architecturally, the house is an excellent example of vernacular Greek Revival and later Victorian modes.

Part I . HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Dates of Erection :

c. 1815
c. 1835
c. 1885
c. 1930

2. Architect : unknown

3. Original and Subsequent Owners

1813 JAN 13 Henry Ward
1833 MAY 1 Matthias Whritenour
1885 JUL 15 Daniel W. Whritenour
1898 MAY 20 Daniel A. Wheeler
1900 Abram S Hewitt
1923 The Ringwood Company
c.1943 Swabees
1956 JAN 23 Klinger, Harry E. and Bette
1983 The State of New Jersey

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers : Unknown

5. Original plans and construction : None found

6. Alterations and Additions :

The Whritenour House has had at least four architectural transformations over 170 years. The seminal house may date to c.1815 when Henry Ward received the property from the larger tract owned by Thomas, Catherine and Elizabeth Ward (See Ward-Ryerson-Patterson House HABS NO. NJ-923). This earliest portion would be the middle segment which probably consisted of cellar with bulkhead access, a living-main level and a sleeping garret. Evidence of this early form is suggested in the stone foundation where the two main cellars are joined by a passageway (SEE PHOTO 13). The northern wall here is a jagged opening that seems to have been created by cutting into a pre-existing stone wall. The fenestration, roof configuration and overall form of this Federal Era dwelling are not clear architecturally.

WHRITENOUR HOUSE
HABS NO. NJ-922 (PAGE 3)

Sometime around 1835, probably associated with the Matthias Whritenour occupancy of the property, the plan/form was elaborated upon with the addition of a two-story structure to the northeast. This addition actually subjugated the pre-existing building into a kitchen function. The Greek Revival clad house reinforced the historical orientation of the house southward to the Wanaque River. It added a formal parlor with fireplace and a high style entry enfrainment. This larger, square room was countered with a smaller room and probably the stair to the second floor (SEE PAGE 14). The two plan/forms created a "T" shape. A bulkhead access to the cellar was nestled along the south side corner leading to the new cellar. The old cellar was made accessible by cutting the passageway in the older foundation wall mentioned above. There does not appear to have been any internal connection to the cellars at this time. The stair to the second floor gave access to the bedrooms in the new addition and probably to the old garret space over the kitchen.

Sometime, shortly after the c.1835 expansion (c.1835-65), a single-story shed was added to the southwest side of the kitchen. The foundation, roof configuration and overall form are unknown, However the foundation and floor constructions are technologically similar to the c.1835 addition. The shed was built over a crawl space .

Later in the nineteenth century, the Whritenour House was significantly modified in a Victorian mode. The older kitchen segment was expanded vertically to include a full second story. The formal parlor was asymmetrically balanced with the addition of a bay window to the northeast side facing the road.

The purchase of the property by the Ringwood Company in the 1920's brought about the final major transformation of this house. The most dominant change to the house at this time involved the southwest side of the house. The plan/form was elaborated to include a porch across the southeast side of the main (c.1835) portion of the house which probably extended beyond the south corner but did not cover the cellar bulkhead (SEE PAGE 17). The end plan/form here was expanded with a second floor yielding an additional bedroom. The entire wing was resided with novelty siding. The porches would also date from this period. The older bulkhead access to the cellar was abandoned and another concrete bulkhead was constructed under the porch of the restructured wing. This was reached via an access panel in the porch floor. This installation involved the partial excavation of the crawl space under this wing and the building of a retaining wall. (SEE PAGE 17).

The Klingers left their impressions on the Whritenour house with the exposure of second floor beams in the main parlor (SEE PHOTO 10) and the addition of cornice mouldings. The segmental spandrels spanning between the porch posts were added. And the girder under the interior partition on the northeast wing was rebuilt. The bay window on the southwest elevation was also added at this time (SEE PHOTO 4).

B. Historical Context

Documentary research suggests that seminal house form may have been built by Henry Ward around 1813 (Lenik 1983 : 42). Ward and the house's relationship to the Longpond Ironworks is unclear. It appears that he was simply a farmer. For a detailed discussion of the Long Pond Ironworks Historic District see National Register Nomination, HCI and Lenik Reports. The property was purchased by Matthias Whritenour on May 1, 1833. Whritenour (1802-90) was minister at the Methodist Episcopal Church in nearby Stonetown. In most of the census records, however, Whritenour was listed as a farmer which was probably his full time occupation.

The house remained in the Whritenour family for some sixty-five years. Matthias' son, Daniel Webster Whritenour, by his second wife, Sarah Monks, inherited his father's house in 1885. The Whritenours took in boarders during their tenure and these included not only farm hands but also teachers at the local Long Pond (later Hewitt) school. The 1860 agricultural census clearly indicates that the Whritenour farming activities were modest in extent and economically not very prosperous. By 1880, however, the extent and value of the farm increased considerably. The plight of the Whritenour farm took a turn for the worse in the 1890's and in 1898 Daniel assigned his property to Daniel A. Wheeler. Whritenour's credit was severely overdrawn at many local business. Wheeler's son, Edwin, sold the property to Abram S. Hewitt in 1900 (Lenik and Ehrhardt 1986 : 97). In 1923 the Ringwood Company obtained the premises and began a "restoration" of the house (Bette Klinger 1985 : personal communication). The Company rented the house to various tenants.

In the 1940's, the house was sold to a Mr. Swabee, a college professor from New York City who used the house as a weekend retreat. In 1956 Bud and Bette Klinger purchased the property and returned the house to a full time residence. The State of New Jersey took title to the premises in 1983. The Klingers vacated the house in March of 1986.

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character

The Whritenour House is of architectural interest because of its early date and its evolution over time. The seminal building represents early settlement of the Long Pond Ironworks period. The later transformations demonstrate the importance of this house in an evolving and surviving community of Hewitt. Its periods and its styling would make this building of state and local significance. Its inclusion in the Long Pond Ironworks Historic District would warrant national significance.

2. Condition of Fabric

The condition of this house is good, due to the care of the most recent owners, the Klingers. There is some deterioration of the frame at the corners and the floor joists evidence some powder post beetle infestation. The physical appearance of the extant fabric has excellent integrity from all periods.

B. Description of the Exterior

1. Overall dimensions of the composite house are 54 feet - 8 inches by 16 feet at the southwest end and 26 feet - 2 inches at the northeast end. The three principal plan forms are sequentially from northeast to southwest : (SEE PAGE 14)

1. 26 feet - 2 inches by 18 feet - 4 inches
2. 19 feet - 10 inches by 16 feet
3. 16 feet - 8 inches by 16 feet.

The enclosed alcove attached to the southeast side of the house is 8 feet - 10 inches by 7 feet - 4 inches. The "L" shaped porch along the southeast side of the northeast plan/form is 24 feet - 5 inches long by 7 feet at the short end and 14 feet - 4 inches on the long side. The porch along the opposite end is rectilinear and 16 feet - 6 inches by 7 feet - four inches. The 45-degree bay window projects 1 foot - 4 inches from the northeast wall and is 8 feet - seven inches wide. The three window sides of the bay are each 3 feet - seven inches wide.

2. The foundations of the various plan/forms are of stone. The stone work consists of various granites, fieldstones and puddingstones. The central portion and the alcove extension stonework is of coursed rubble. The northeast segment is of coursed rubble with some ashlar trimming at the corners. The southwest portion is of coursed rubble that has been stuccoed. The bay window foundation is of brick masonry. There are cellars under the central and northeast plan/forms and crawl spaces below the others. The general thickness of the foundations varies from 22 to 16 inches.

3. Because the house was occupied at the time of this recording, the frame construction was not examined. It may be safe to assume that the frame consists of both hewn and sawn studs. The beveled wooden siding extant on the majority of the exterior wall surface is of 5 and 1/2 inch exposure. The cladding on the southwestern end is standard novelty siding.

4. All of the major plan/forms have bearing walls along the southeast and northwest walls. The framing of the first floors of the center and the larger portions are similar in materials but different in disposition. The center portion is a simple single span (12 feet - 6 inches) of beams that are actually half logs in section. These are roughly 6 inches in depth and are spaced 19 to 26 inches apart. The beams bear on the stone masonry walls and are let into the wall plates. There are 2x6's placed next to each of the beams in an apparent effort to relieve the old members of their load. The joists of the larger, northeastern portion are spanning in the same direction but are broken into two unequal spans by a girder that corresponds to the partition between the front and back rooms at the main level. The present girder is a replacement composed of four 2x8's installed by Bud Klinger. The original girder was failing and according to Klinger it was a solid 8x8 inch section with both the joists and the wall studs above let into it. The girder is presently supported by steel columns. The original section was a clear span. The two spans here are roughly 7 feet to the rear and 15 feet to the front. The joists are also half logs roughly 6 inches deep and of varying widths (4-8 inches). The floor of the southwestern section is carried by similar half log sections over the crawl space. These are roughly spaced 24 inches apart. The same is true for the alcove along the southeast side.

None of the second floor framing was visible at the time of this recording. It is assumed that the spans are running in the same direction as the first floor. The roofing systems are different. The larger end (SEE PHOTO 17) portion to the northeast has hewn timber rafters widely (approx. 4 feet apart) spaced with later sawn intermediates and cats placed between them. The rafters are butted without a ridge board. The roof visible from the underside is of wood shingles on wood lath. The roofs of the other two plan/forms are similar and probably of twentieth century vintage.

There are new sawn rafters placed regularly 16 inches on center with a ridge and lath and shingles. Revealed on a formerly exterior wall between the southwestern end segment and the central portion is a board and batten siding system which indicates that the southwestern section was formerly a single story structure awhile the central plan/form was two-story with an exposed end wall condition on the upper level of the southwestern side. The pitch of all the major roofs is 8 in 12.

5. There are two porches along the southeast side of the house. The larger "L"-shaped porch wraps the northeast portion of the house. The smaller, rectilinear porch is along the same side of the southwestern portion. Both porches would appear to date to the early twentieth century. They are column supported structures with a hipped roof over the "L"-shaped one and a shed roof over the other that continues over the alcove extension. The footings for these porches consist of concrete-filled clay flue liners (9-inch square) that carry a continuous girder. 5x6 purlins break up the joist spans of the porch into different lengths of 2x6's. The porch floor is of 1 x 3 1/2 inch decking. The wooden columns are 6 inch square sections with chamfered edges. The shed roof porch carries a continuous gutter. The hipped roofed "L"-shaped porch has exposed rafter ends and without gutters.

Currently, the only access to the cellar is via the interior stair. Until recently, the exterior access to the cellar was through a floor hatch in the southwestern porch, adjacent to the alcove. This would appear to be from the early twentieth century era. The hatch is currently fixed shut. The opening would have led to a wooden stair and an areaway access hollowed out of the crawl space under the northeastern side of the southwestern portion of the house. This areaway was created by the construction of a concrete retaining wall and the cellars were reached via an opening in the foundation wall of the central portion. The original bulkhead access to the cellars is extant under the "L"-shaped porch. This is inaccessible as the porch was built right over top of it. The construction would seem to date from the time of the erection of the main, larger plan/form. It is currently filled with stone but from the inside it could be viewed through a lighted door. It's retaining walls are built of similar stone masonry as the main house foundation. The location of this earlier bulkhead would suggest that there was a porch along the southeast side of the main house.

6. There are two chimneys located between the three principal plan/forms (SEE PHOTO 5). Only the chimney between the northeastern and the central portion is operational. This stack vents the heating boiler and also contains a flue to the fireplace in the parlor and rises to the ridge of the main house. The other chimney is not functioning and appears to have been rebuilt above its base.

7. Openings

a. The main entrance of the house is located on the northeast side of the main plan/form, fronting the turnpike. Apparently, this was relocated from the southeast side of the house where the larger of the two parlor windows is located. The change in the orientation of the entry from the south or river-facing side to the turnpike side may date from the early twentieth century era. The entry has a fine enframing of the Doric Order with pilasters and entablature en ressault (SEE PHOTO 6). The door is a six-paneled 3 foot by 6 foot - 6 inch unit. There is a four light transom over the door. The kitchen is entered directly from the outside via a door on the southeast side. Another door on the same side of the house from the "L"-shaped porch leads to the dining room. Both doors are late Victorian doors with horizontal panels and upper lights.

b. The fenestration of each plan/form varies along the southeast elevation. The larger house portion has two bays at the first and second floors. The second floor windows are of similar three light attic windows in a single sash. The lower two are of similar height and different width with the one toward the corner being 8 inches larger. Both are 2 over 2 double hung wooden sash. There is a cellar window below the lefthand bay that is concealed by the porch. This window is a 3-light single sash. The placement of this window would seem to suggest that the original front door here was entered via a stoop rather than a porch. The middle section has two similar windows on the second floor being 2 over 2 double hung wooden sash. At the lower level, the alcove consumes the southwest side of the wall. The alcove has a pair of 2 over 2 double hung wooden sash on its front side and single, similar units on each of its end walls. On the opposite side, there is the door to the dining room and a single window lighting the stairway to the cellar. The southwestern section has two 6 over 6 sash double hung wooden windows at the second floor. At the first floor level, there is a single window to the left of the door. This is also a 6 over 6 type sash.

The southwest wall (SEE PHOTO 4) has a louvered vent window in the attic gable and a single 6 over 6 sash double hung wooden window toward the right side. The first floor has a modern bay under the upper window that has a single large sliding window in it. This bay is hung on the wall without a foundation, is sided with novelty siding and has a hipped roof of wooden shingles.

The northwest elevation is organized according to the three component parts of the house. The larger plan/form has two attic windows similar to those on the opposite side. At the first floor, the single window is located toward the right end, yielding a large blank space to the left side. The window is a 2 over 2 double hung wooden sash. There is a cellar window roughly centered on the wall and is a single, 3-light sash like those on the second floor (SEE PHOTO 5).

The northeast elevation has a two-story bay window located toward the left end. The bay has three windows on each floor, being slightly larger on the bottom than the top. All are 2 over 2 sashed double hung wooden units. Each window has a recessed wooden panel below it. The whole bay has a brick foundation wall and is capped at the top with a small hipped roof and at the first floor with a short roof skirt. The other window on this elevation is located directly above the main door and is a 2 over 2 sash double hung wooden window. There is a louvred window under the gable in the attic (SEE PHOTO 2).

8. Roof

- a. The main roof is of two sections, one over the larger main segment and another over the middle and southwest end. Both roofs are gables with 8 in 12 slopes. All roofs were originally wood shingle types with replacements of asphalt shingles.
- b. The simple fascias of the house are concealed for the most part by metal gutters. The northeast gable end (SEE PHOTO 2) has the most interest. The raking cyma recta cornice and the broad fascia return at the gable ends (right side removed).

C. Description of the Interior

1. Floor Plans

See Sketch Plans on Pages 17-19.

2. Stairways

The principal stairway is located within the plan form of the middle section on the common wall with the main plan/form. (SEE PAGE 18). This flight begins at the northeast corner of this intersection and rises steeply to a landing in the upper hallway (SEE PHOTO 14). The stairhall at the lower level creates a transitional space between the two forms (SEE PHOTO 9). The stair to the cellar is located under this stair and is partitioned off from the adjoining dining room. Both exterior bulkhead doors to the cellar are extant but covered with the porches. The older bulkhead under the "L"-shaped porch appears to have stone steps. The other is an early twentieth century wood stringer stair.

3. Flooring

The flooring on the central section is made from 1 x 11 inch tongue and groove sections. That of the main house is made from 1 x 8 1/2 inch tongue and groove sections (SEE PHOTO 12). The kitchen floor is tiled and the upper rooms are carpeted. The southeast bedroom has a strip wood floor (SEE PHOTO 10).

4. Wall and Ceiling Finishes

The exposure of the second floor beams in the parlor (SEE PHOTO 10) ceiling was done by the Klingers. Evidence of wood lath and plastering can be seen on the underside of these beams. There are mostly plaster walls here except for the southeastern-most walls around the fireplace which are gypsum board. The walls of the alcove are wainscoted with double beaded paneling. The false beams in the ceiling (SEE PHOTO 11) were added by the Klingers. The walls of the upper level are mostly plaster. One middle bedroom is paneled. Walls in the cellar are whitewashed and the beams and flooring are exposed.

5. Openings

a. Doors

Minor door openings are of simple board doors (SEE PHOTO 9). The principal door openings (bedrooms) are Victorian 4-panel doors (SEE PHOTO 16).

6. Decorative Features

The interior of the house is not very decorative. The enframement of the front door (SEE PHOTO 8), the bay window and other parlor window frames (SEE PHOTO 10), the landing of the stair up to the second floor (SEE PHOTO 9) and the alcove off of the dining room (SEE PHOTO 11) are all of note.

7. Hardware: Interior door hardware is of early twentieth century vintage. It includes pairs of butt hinges with rim box locks. (See photograph 16)
8. Mechanical Systems
 - a. Heating: There is a central boiler in the cellar that feeds a radiator system of mid-twentieth century vintage. (See photograph 8)
 - b. Lighting: All fixtures have been installed by the Klingers.
 - c. Plumbing: There is a cast iron building sewer that penetrates to the exterior from the areaway located along the common wall between the middle and southwest sections. The fixtures are of mid-twentieth century vintage.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: The house sits at the base of a hillside facing S 35 degrees E toward the Wanaque River just after it flows under the Greenwood Lake Turnpike bridge. It opens onto a grassy lawn that is defined by the river to the southeast, Greenwood Lake Turnpike to the northeast, the hillside to the northwest and a clearing in the woods to the southwest.
2. Historic landscape design: The site would not appear to be significantly altered over time. The front door of the house has been altered to face the turnpike (see above) but it is still oriented to the river. This siting is reinforced by the longitudinal axis and the porches. From evidence beneath the "L"-shaped porch, the c. 1835 entrance was probably reached by a stoop rather than a porch.
3. Outbuildings: There are two outbuildings southwest of the house where the driveway provides a turnaround. The smaller one closes this turnaround to the southwest and is a modern shed/workshop erected by the Klingers. This simple one-story, gable-roofed rectangle has an inset front wall that permits the roof to override this wall and be supported by wooden columns. This was used by Mrs. Klinger in her work with antiques. The other building is a one-story carriage house (c. 1920) that has been altered and converted into a garage.

PART III SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings

No architectural drawings were found.

B. Historic views

No historic views were found.

C. Bibliography

1. Cultural Resource Survey of the Monksville Reservoir Project Area
Passaic County, New Jersey. Volume 1, September 1984
Edward J. Lenik, SOPA, Jo Ann Cotz and Kathleen L. Ehrhardt
2. Architectural / Archeological Survey and Preservation
Planning Project for the Long Pond Ironworks Historic District,
West Milford Twp. , Passaic County, NJ. October 1982
Jo Ann Cotz, Herbert J. Githens, Brian H. Morrell and Edward S. Rutsch
Historic Conservation and Interpretation, Inc.
3. Data Recovery Excavations In The Monksville Reservoir Project Area,
Passaic County, New Jersey , Volume 1, Historical Archeology, March
1986 Edward J. Lenik, SOPA and Kathleen L. Ehrhardt.

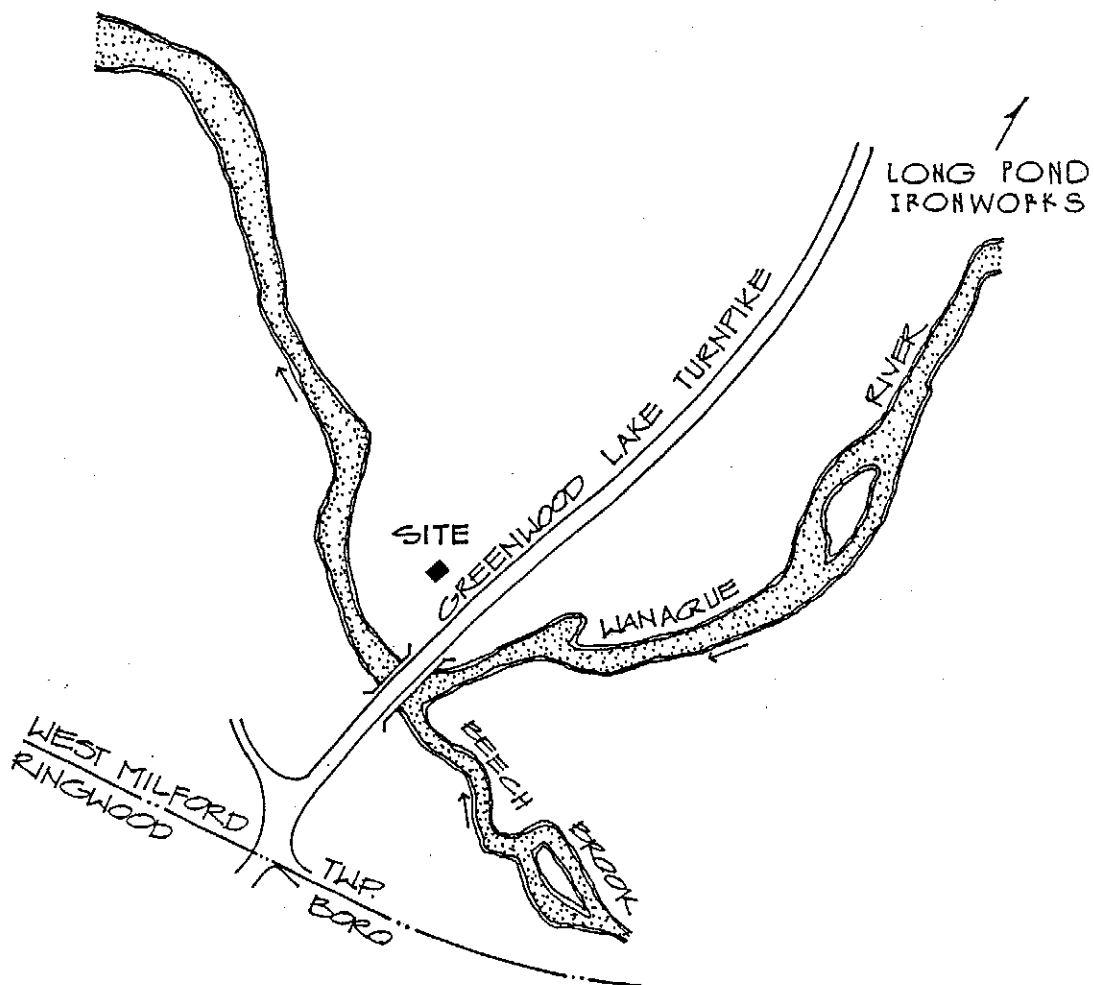
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentary recording was undertaken in order to facilitate the construction of the Monksville Reservoir by the North Jersey District Water Supply Commission and the Hackensack Water Company. The Whritenour House is located within the area to be flooded by this reservoir. Upon completion and approval of this recording, the house is to be relocated on higher ground within the Long Pond Ironworks Historic District. The information gathering and photographic recording took place in July and December of 1985 and February of 1986. The later occurred when the Greenwood Lake Turnpike roadway was being relocated and the Wanaque River was being temporarily diverted, both activities being east and northeast of the house.

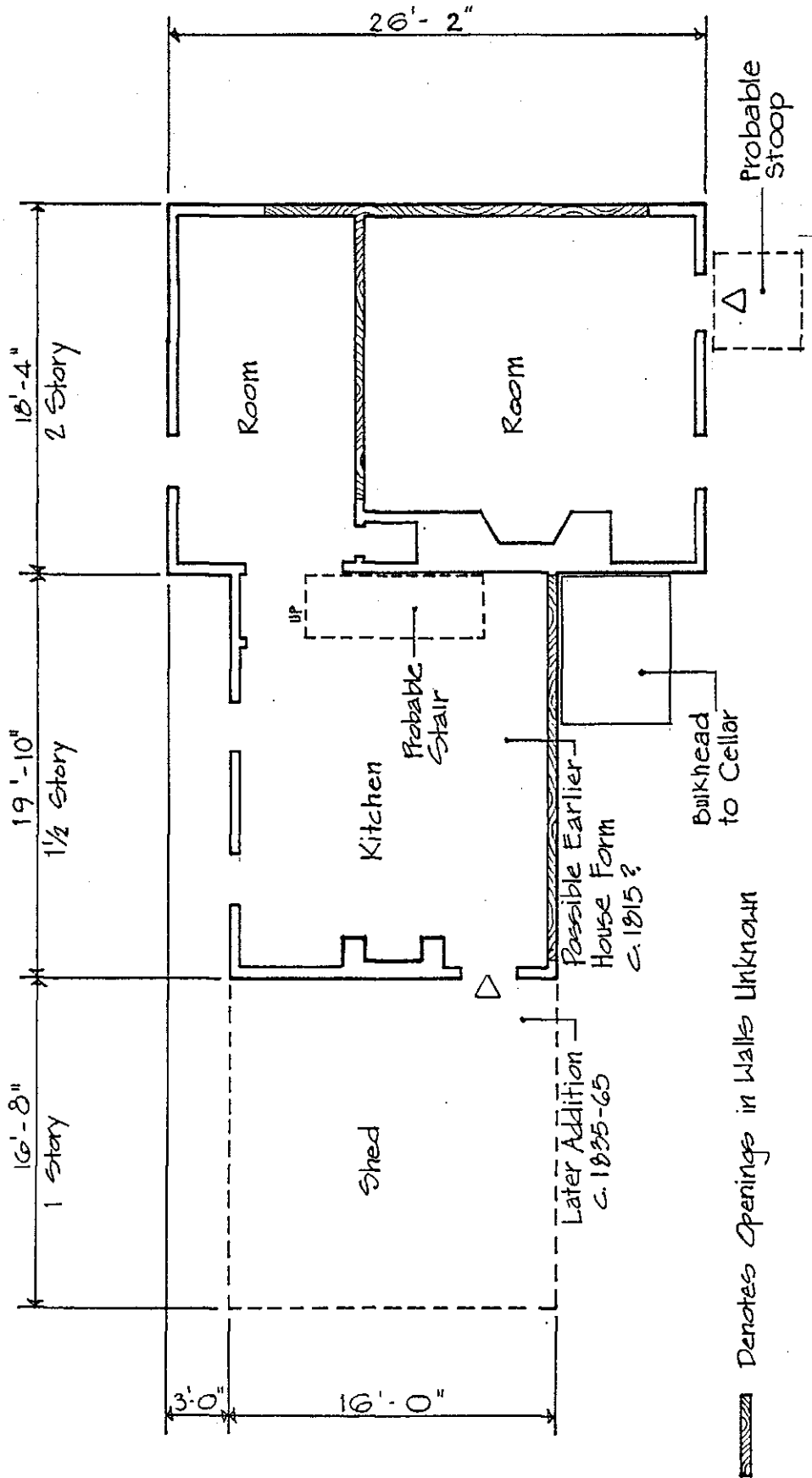
Prepared by : Herbert J. Githens, Historic Architect
Jersey City, New Jersey

Tony Masso, Photographer
New Brunswick, New Jersey

27 March 1986

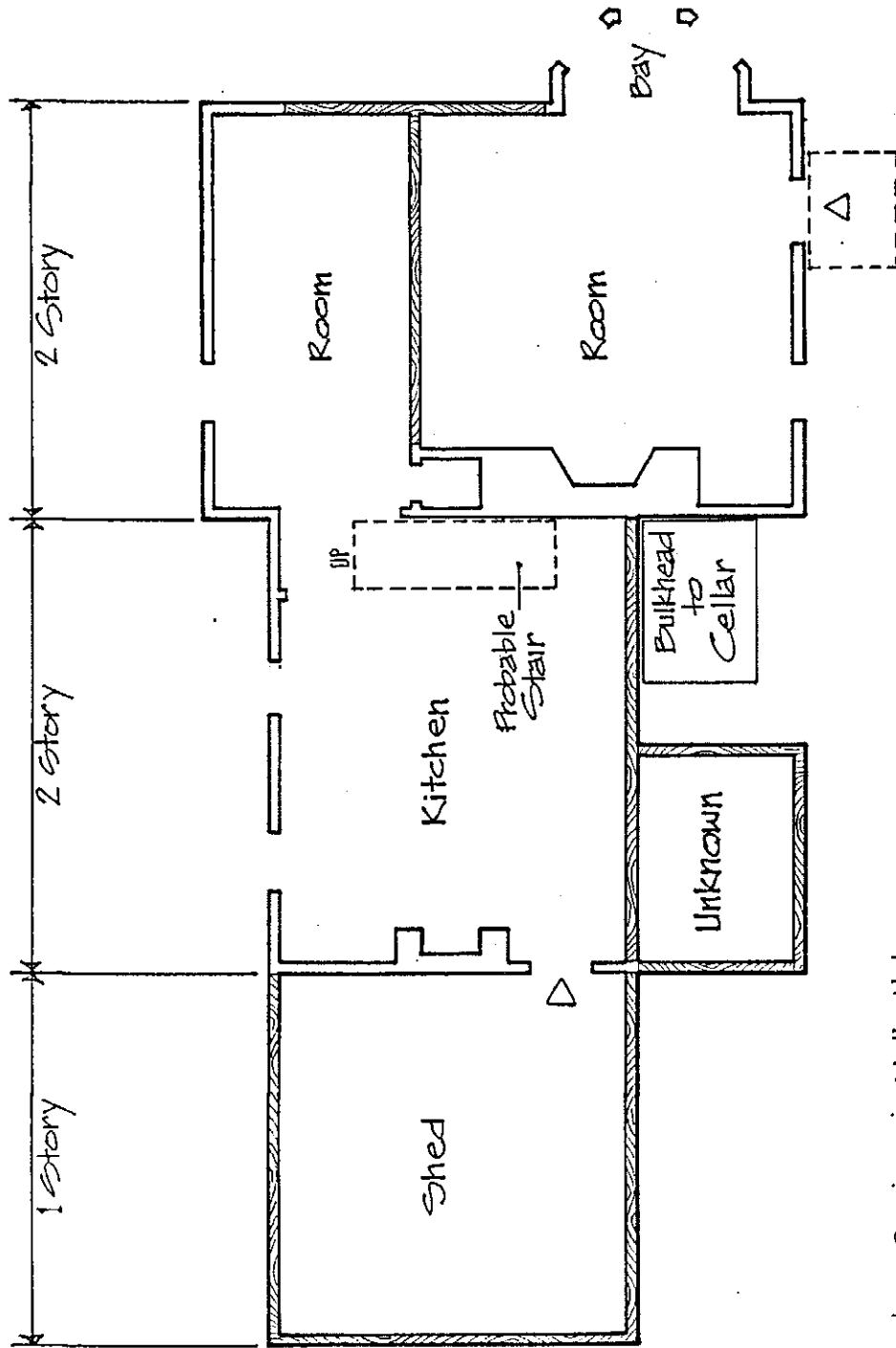


LOCATION SKETCH MAP

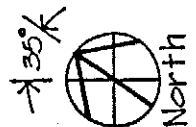


MATTHIAS WHRITENOUR HOUSE c. 1835

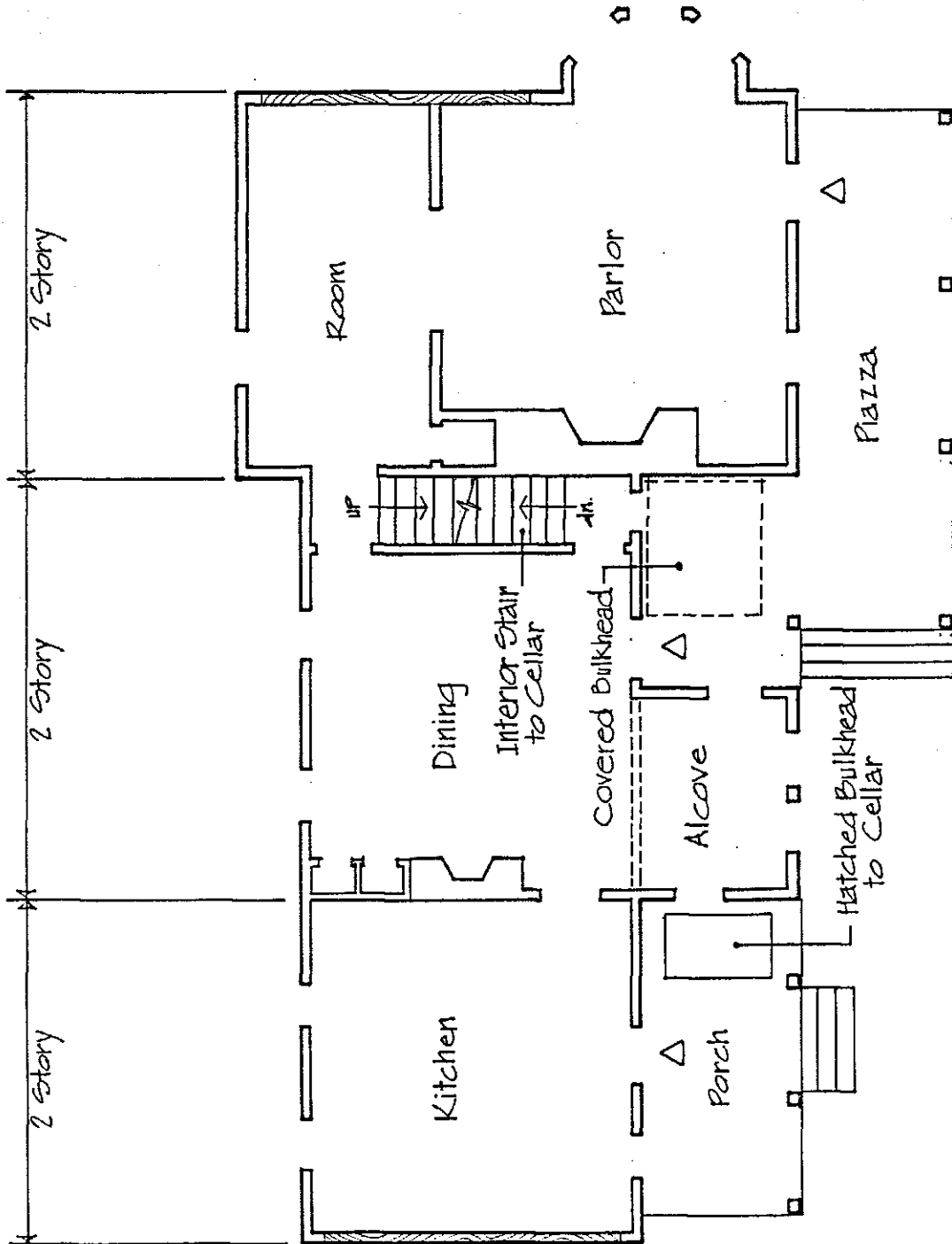




Denotes Openings in Walls Unknown



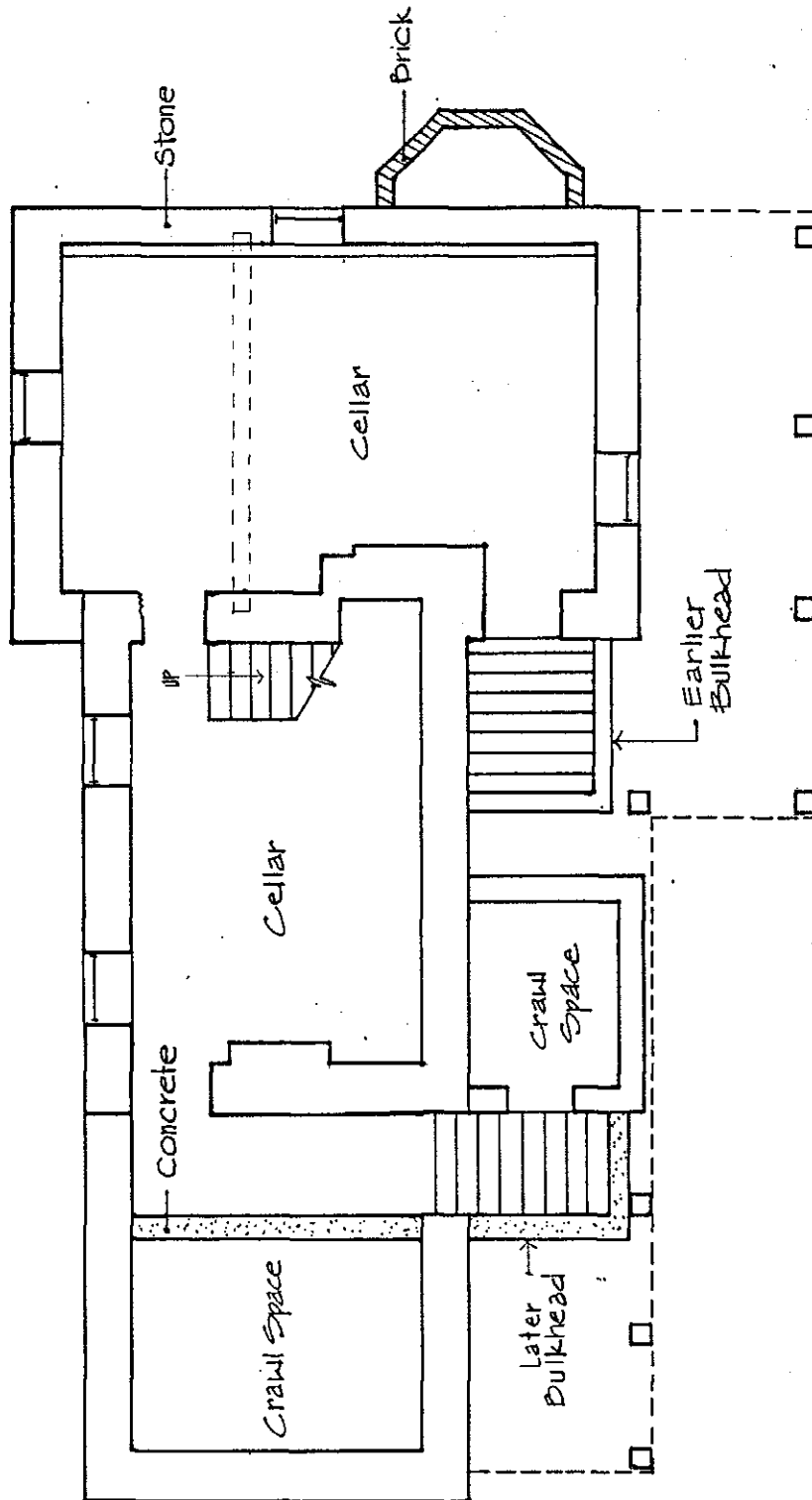
WHRITENOUR HOUSE c.1890



RINGWOOD COMPANY c. 1930

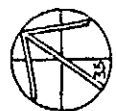
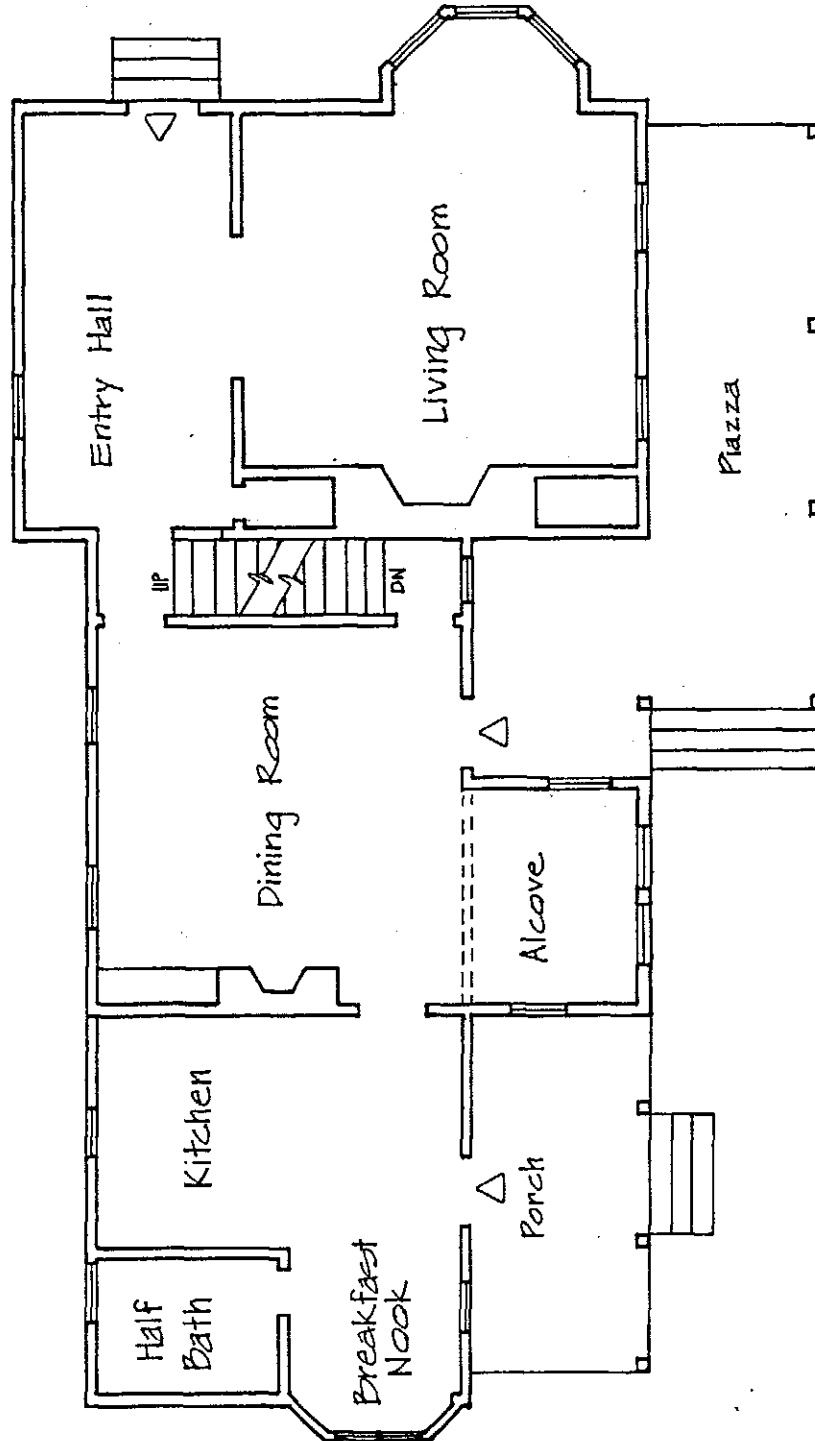


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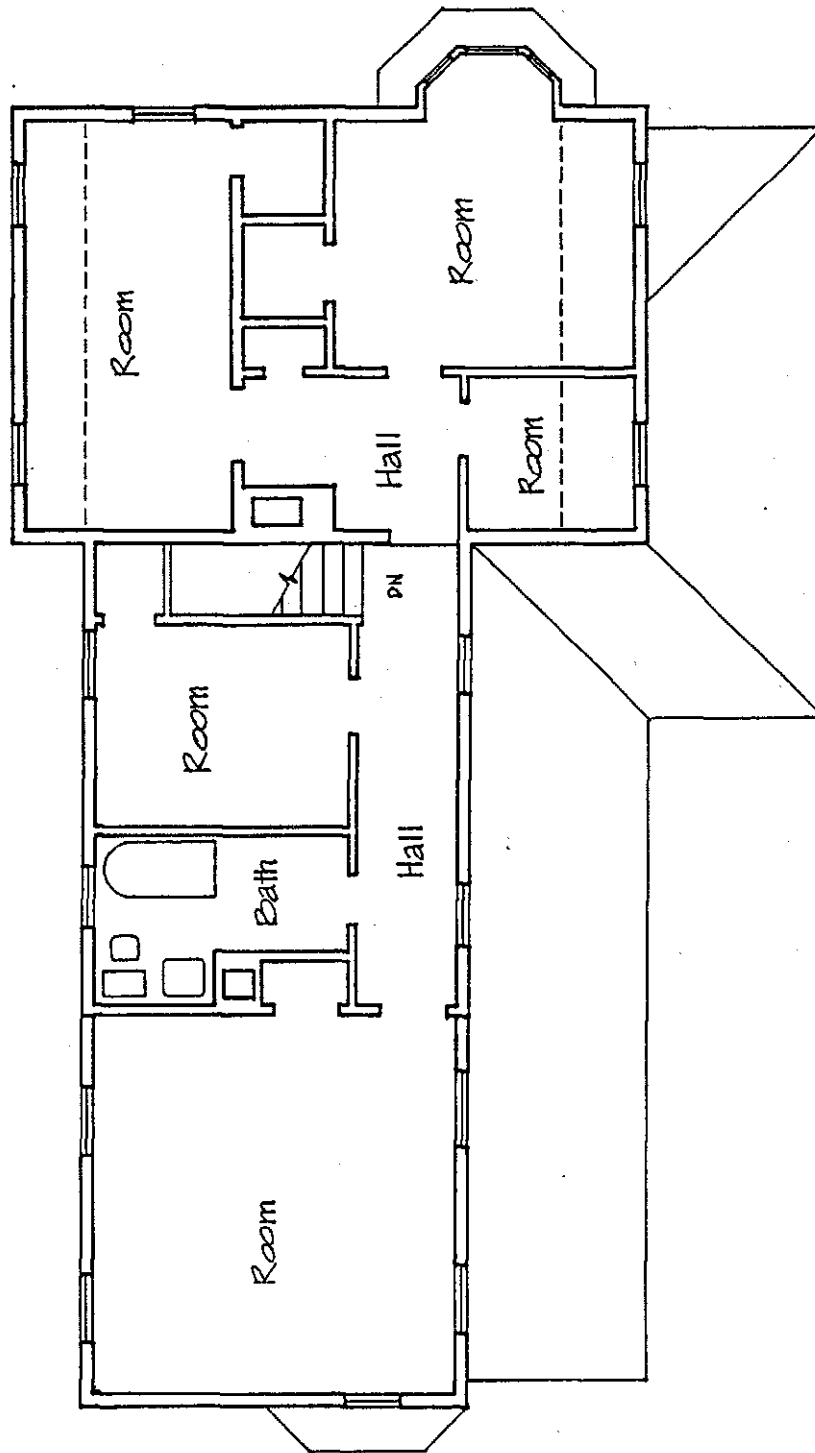
EXISTING BASEMENT PLAN

012 5 10



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR

0 12 5 10



EXISTING SECOND FLOOR

0 12 5 10